

# **MEDIA RELEASE**

**NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA**

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ATTENTION: Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

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## **New study puts fathers under the parenthood microscope**

First-time fathers in Tasmania are invited to take part in a new University of Tasmania study supported by the Tasmanian Early Years Foundation: “Expectation versus experience: How do Tasmanian men narrate their transition to first-time fatherhood?”

Dr Meredith Nash from the UTAS School of Social Sciences is leading the project which will investigate men’s experience of first-time fatherhood in order to find ways to provide them with better support during the antenatal period.

The study will put Tasmanian fathers in the foreground, moving the attention away from mothers, who have traditionally been the focus of parenting research.

Dr Nash said that men are given very few opportunities to discuss how they experience the transition to fatherhood. This project is designed to help identify what their educational and care needs are during this critical time.

“Very little is known about how men perceive fathering or how they prepare for this role, especially in an Australian context,” Dr Nash said.

Dr Nash is looking to interview at least 30 Tasmanian men from different social backgrounds who are about to become fathers for the first time.

Interviews will be conducted once during their partner’s pregnancy and once following birth.

“By encouraging Tasmanian men to discuss their feelings and thoughts about fatherhood, it will be possible to develop a richer account of the kinds of support, advice, and information that they might need,” Dr Nash said.

Dr Nash said the study will also increase community awareness about the role of fathers during pregnancy and the early postnatal period and hopefully, lead to new state-wide policies and interventions.

“Any improvement in the ways in which Tasmanian men are supported through the transition to fatherhood will positively affect maternal and infant health outcomes,” she said.

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